

COACHING COACHES TOOLS

Checklist of Effective Goals



AN EFFECTIVE GOAL IS . . .

CHECK	
Identifies a change in students.	
Is measurable.	
Identifies a teaching strategy to be implemented.	

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Tool 1: Coaching Coaches Process

**Time:**

20-45 minutes (at least once or twice a month)

PREPARATION

- » Ensure coachee completes the appropriate paper work (usually this is the Coaching Impact Tool for each teacher she or he is working with and the Time Spent tool)

CONDITIONS

- » Meet in a private space, on Skype, Facetime or some other form of internet communication
- » Clarify that
 - the conversation is not an evaluation; it's coaching—a private conversation to keep the coachee moving forward
 - the conversation is confidential
 - you will protect teacher confidentiality
 - the conversation is a way for your team to improve the coaching process (that is, you expect to learn from your coachee ideas and strategies that can improve the way you'll coach)

DISCUSSION POINTS

- » **Procedures:** Use the Coaching Impact Tool to discuss each teacher with whom the coach is collaborating. Clarify that each component has been successfully completed.
- » **Partnership:** Discuss scenarios where the coach has interacted with teachers and ask them which principles they embodied.
- » **Communication:** Identify a goal communication strategy. Have the coachee use the self-coaching tool for that area. Discuss what they learned doing self-coaching.
- » **Leadership:** Discuss leadership challenges and explore how the leadership strategies could be applied in each situation.

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Tool 2: After-Action Report Dialogue

**Time:**

60 minutes or more

PREPARATION

- » Ensure each coachee answers the first two questions on the After-Action Report related to one teacher they have coached:
 - What was supposed to happen?
 - What really happened?
- » Ensure each coachee has other questions to ask the group about the case

CONDITIONS

- » Meet with your team in a setting where everyone can hear everyone else and where there will be few interruptions.
- » Clarify that
 - conversation is to be primarily positive and supportive.
 - each coach hosts her or his discussion.
 - everyone should practice listening skills during the meeting (consider having participants video record themselves during the meetings).
 - confidentiality of teachers should be respected and no teacher names should be used during the conversation.

THE PROCESS

- » Everyone receives a copy of the After-Action Report Form that was completed by the coach.
- » Each coach hosts a conversation about her or his case, leading the discussion and asking for suggestions.
- » At the conclusion of the conversation, the host coach completes the rest of the form with the help of everyone in the group.

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Tool 3: Video Study Groups

**Time:**

60-90 minutes

PREPARATION

- » Have an inexpensive HD camera (such as an iPhone or Flip camera) and easy-to-use editing software (such as iMovie) available
- » Ensure all coachees are clear on the common teaching practice being reviewed and recorded
- » Ensure comments about lessons are positive, honest, constructive, and useful by identifying values the group will work from while reviewing videos

CONDITIONS

- » Clarify that video recording and sharing will be done only on a volunteer basis, and is not mandatory.
- » Meet with your team in a setting where everyone can hear everyone else and where there will be few interruptions.
- » Clarify that
 - conversation is to be primarily positive and supportive.
 - each coachee hosts discussion of his or her video.

THE PROCESS

- » Volunteer participants will video record themselves implementing the common teaching practice in their classroom.
- » Prior to sharing it with the group, coachees edit their own video, looking for aspects of the lesson that went well, and a section of the lesson that they wanted to improve.
- » Coachees then share their video with the group.
 - Share positive clips first.
 - Coachees should comment on what they saw in the clip before asking the group for feedback.

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Tool 4: Creating One-Page Document

**Time:**

90 minutes or more

PREPARATION

- » Every coach brings all materials for all coaching of teachers to the session
- » Prior to the session, coaches review their notes to see which teaching practices they have shared with teachers

CONDITIONS

- » Meet with your team in a setting where everyone can hear everyone else, and where there will be few interruptions.
- » The room needs to have walls where chart paper can be posted.
- » Bring chart paper, stickies, and markers.
- » Clarify that
 - this is a brainstorming conversation, so no decisions are final.
 - everyone will have input into the final draft.
 - the final draft will still be revised as necessary.

THE PROCESS

- » Everyone receives a package of stickies.
- » Everyone writes down the name of the practices that they are sharing with teachers (such practices as teaching expectations, increasing ratios of interaction, using checks for understanding, employing cooperative learning).
- » Once everyone has written down all of their practices, they are posted on a wall.
- » Use affinity diagram process (p. 193 of *Unmistakable Impact*) to sort out all the stickies.
- » Each individual creates their own version of the one-page document.
- » Facilitator then asks for feedback on what should go on the document, and facilitator creates a one-page synthesis.
- » Facilitator then asks the group to consider these questions:
 - What have we missed? Have we adequately addressed:
 - Content Planning
 - Formative Assessment
 - Engaging Instruction
 - Community Building
 - Can we make this simpler? What can we remove?
 - Are we really sharing all of the practices we've discussed?

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Tool 5: Creating Checklists

**Time:**

90 minutes – 3 hours or more (may require more than one session)

PREPARATION

- » Every coach brings all materials related to the teaching practices listed on the one-page document
- » Prior to the session, each coach reviews the one-page document that has been created to summarize the practices coaches share
- » Everyone needs to read and understand the materials they will be discussing during the session

CONDITIONS

- » Participants need to be prepared for these sessions; if they haven't done the reading and reviewed materials they won't be helpful.
- » The room needs to have walls where chart paper can be posted.
- » Bring chart paper, markers, and stickies.
- » Clarify that
 - everyone needs to participate to create the best checklists.
 - this isn't an evaluation of anyone's knowledge, but a time to clarify understanding.

THE PROCESS

- » Identify one practice on the one-page document for which you need a checklist.
- » Ask everyone to create a checklist for that practice.
 - (An alternative is to use a variation on the jigsaw cooperative learning structure described on pages 211-213 in High-Impact Instruction.)
- » Share the checklist for checklists so coaches can use it as a guideline for their work.
- » Ask everyone to share their checklist.
- » Create a master document that synthesizes everyone's work.
- » Ask, "what can we do to make this simpler?"
- » Refine the draft checklist by reviewing the checklist for checklists.

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Tool 6: Checklist for Checklists



AN EFFECTIVE THINKING PROMPT IS . . .

	CHECK
Concise: Less than ten lines and as short as possible.	
Explicit: Everything important is stated.	
Precise: Each item is clearly described.	
Easy to Understand: Use the right words stated in the simplest way.	
Comprehensive: Everything that needs to be addressed is addressed.	

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Tool 7: Coaching Impact Tool



COACH

DATE

TCHR CODE

COMMENTS

Enroll		
Goal		
Teaching Strategy		
Explain		
Model		
Observe		
Explore		
Refine		

NOTES

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Tool 7: Coaching Impact Tool



Jim Knight	11/19/2012	JK02
COACH	DATE	TCHR CODE

COMMENTS		
Enroll	Yes	Enrolled the teacher via one-to-one interview; agreed to be video recorded
Goal	Yes	90% ToT during direct instruction three classes in a row. ToT was 68% during coach observations. OTR was six in 10 min.
Teaching Strategy	Opportunities to Respond	Increase OTR to four per minute by (a) preparing checks for understanding in advance, (b) calling students randomly (no hands in the air)
Explain	Yes	Shared the OTR checklist; shared the checking for understanding strategies in High-Impact Instruction
Model	Yes	Three models: 1. watched video; 2. in class-no students; 3. in class with students—teaching subject/verb identification
Observe	Yes	Video recorded teacher's direct instruction
Explore	Yes	11/19/12—Teacher coded her OTR and saw two per minute. ToT is up to 84%. Both big improvements.
Refine	Yes	11/16/12—Teacher needs to call on all students. Teacher needs to scan the class. I'll use seating chart to code who is responding.

NOTES

We've made a lot of progress, but some students are still disruptive and off-task. If we don't hit 90% soon, I'll suggest teaching expectations for direct instruction.

We also might explore ratios of interaction, corrections, and other instructional practices such as cooperative learning or thinking prompts.

Teacher has made great gains (15% improvement on ToT) and is very keen to keep moving forward. Coaching is making a difference for her and her students.

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Tool 8: Knowledge of Practices



Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with each of the following statements by filling in the appropriate number.

I have a one-page document that describes the teaching practices I share with teachers.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I can easily list the teaching practices I share with teachers.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I have created checklists for all the teaching practices I share.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I can easily describe the teaching practices I share with teachers.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I am very comfortable leading workshops on the practices I share with teachers.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I am very comfortable modeling the practices I share with teachers.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I am very comfortable helping teachers adapt practices to fit the unique needs of their students.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

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Tool 9: Partnership Communication Self-Assessment



COACH

DATE

TCHR CODE

Complete this survey after watching a video recording of you conducting a coaching session with a collaborating teacher. Indicate how much you disagree or agree with each of the following statements by filling in the appropriate number.

I listen more than I talk.

DISAGREE ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 AGREE

I care about my collaborating teacher.

DISAGREE ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 AGREE

I have found things I hold in common with my collaborating teacher.

DISAGREE ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 AGREE

I feel a connection with my collaborating teacher.

DISAGREE ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 AGREE

I am genuinely curious about my collaborating teachers' answers to questions.

DISAGREE ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 AGREE

The questions I asked my collaborating teacher effectively prompted him/her to reflect on his/her teaching.

DISAGREE ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 AGREE

On at least three occasions, I acted to strengthen my emotional connection with my collaboration teacher.

DISAGREE ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 AGREE

I position the collaborating teacher as the decision maker.

DISAGREE ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 AGREE

My actions and words show that I see the collaborating teacher and me as equals.

DISAGREE ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 AGREE

My explanations are very clear and easy to understand.

DISAGREE ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 AGREE

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Tool 10: Partnership Leadership Self-Assessment



COACH

DATE

TCHR CODE

Complete the survey by indicating how much you disagree or agree with each of the following statements by filling in the appropriate number.

I respect the teachers with whom I work.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I push hard to see instruction improve for our students.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I rarely say things I regret.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I don't hesitate to say what has to be said.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I use my time effectively.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

People can count on me to do what I say I'll do.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

My main concern is what is best for teachers and students.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I have positive relationships with collaborating teachers.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I know what I am trying to accomplish in my work.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

I don't let setbacks bother me too much.

DISAGREE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 AGREE

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Tool 11: Case-Typers



Five minutes into your presentation, a table of participants pull out their computers and start typing. At first, you assume, or hope, they are taking notes, but when you glance over to the table, you realize that they are actually writing email or doing other tasks online. A few minutes later, you notice that one participant has her credit card out and appears to be making an online purchase. As the workshop progresses, the group gets more off task.

What should you do, if anything, to get the group focused on your workshop?

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Tool 12: Case– The Independent Thinker



Instructional Coach Alison Kessel loved the Promises Bound reading program. She had spent a year working hard to become a Promises Bound trainer of trainers, and she felt she knew almost everything there was to know about it.

Her district had adopted Promises Bound, and Alison enjoyed conducting many workshops about the program. However, even though her workshop participants seemed to love the material, Alison noticed that teachers weren't implementing. To increase implementation she suggested the district create an instructional coach position, and she was thrilled when her principal told her that she would, indeed, spend the following year coaching.

One of Alison's first "coachees" was Jane Bower, a seventh-grade reading teacher. Jane was interested in Promises Bound, and Alison met her and excitedly told her all about it. After listening to her coach, Jane said, "I like it, but I'm going to have to tweak it a bit for my kids. I don't think I need to model every day, and my students will need more practice than you are suggesting. And I think I can skip the first five lessons. They know that content. In fact, so long as they get a lot more practice so they don't forget what they learn, I can skip some other lessons as I go through the stuff. I'd like them to do a lot more peer work too, where they score each other's practice attempts."

Alison had heard a lot about the importance of fidelity and she was convinced that changing the program would mean that Jane's students wouldn't learn it, and she told Jane that Promises Bound had to be done the right way, with no changes. Jane, however, dug in her heels. She was adamant that she knew what was best for her students.

The two of them were at a standstill, and Alison didn't know what she should do next.

What do you think the instructional coach should do?

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Tool 13: Case–The Reluctant Instructional Leader



Instructional Coach David Miller was deeply committed to ensuring that Project Achievement was central within his school and that the project had the greatest positive impact that it could have on Terra Nova High School's students. David worked hard to ensure that teachers were implementing interventions, and he did numerous little acts to encourage, support, and validate his teachers. Consequently, David was highly valued by the staff at the high school.

David's principal Dr. Flinton took a "hands-off" approach to instructional leadership. "I feel," said the principal, "that I have outstanding staff, and the best thing I can do to support them is to get out of their way and let them teach." Dr. Flinton observed his teachers no more than required, seldom gave them feedback on specific teaching practices, and spoke in glowing terms of the professionalism of his staff. "I don't believe," Dr. Flinton once said, "that we help professionals do a better job by constantly bothering them."

When Dr. Flinton met one-to-one with David, he gave him very positive feedback, telling him he was doing a great job, that he meant a lot to the school, that he was "very happy to have a good man like David working at Terra Nova High School." In team meetings, Dr. Flinton was also positive and supportive. On a number of occasions when Dr. Flinton spoke with the staff, Dr. Flinton told teachers that David had "a lot of good stuff, and that they should look into what David's got to offer."

David was grateful for his principal's positive words, but he wished that Dr. Flinton would be more specific about what "the good stuff" was that he had to offer. David was fairly certain that Dr. Flinton had very little knowledge of the interventions that were available through the Project Achievement project. The project offered classroom management, inclusive instruction, teacher planning, and learning strategy interventions. David just wished his principal knew more about what he was offering.

Generally, Dr. Flinton's "hands-off" approach hadn't been a problem, but David felt that he would be able to do a lot more if his principal knew about Project Achievement's interventions and if he actively encouraged teachers to implement specific interventions where appropriate. Recently, an even bigger issue had David feeling that he really needed his principal's support.

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Tool 13: Case–The Reluctant Instructional Leader



Terra Nova High School was at the start of a new cycle for their school improvement plan. David was excited about the opportunity for Project Achievement’s research-based strategies to be incorporated into the school improvement plan, but he was also concerned that if the school didn’t adopt the project’s strategies, teachers would be overwhelmed by too many options and choose not to use what David had to offer.

Unfortunately, the head of the school’s reading committee, Jan Chelios, did not support Project Achievement’s Reading Strategies. Ms. Chelios said that the strategies took too much time to teach, and they forced teachers to do too much grading. Ms. Chelios tried teaching one of the strategies once, but she quit halfway through the lessons saying, “the kids have got it now, I don’t need to overkill this.” David didn’t feel he should push Ms. Chelios at that point, but he suspected she simply didn’t want to do more work than she was used to.

David wasn’t on the school improvement team, but he had heard that Ms. Chelios was proposing that the school improvement plan include an old vocabulary strategy from the 80s, and some simple graphic organizers. None of the interventions she proposed were research-based, from what David could tell, and he knew that what his project could offer would have a much more positive impact on student achievement. When David spoke with Ms. Chelios informally about including the Project Achievement materials, she said, “I’m the head of the reading committee, not you. I’ll be the one who makes the decisions if you don’t mind.”

Angry, disappointed and frustrated, David met with Dr. Flinton and told him exactly how he felt. Dr. Flinton listened compassionately, and said, “Well you’re an important person here, and I’m committed to doing everything I can to make you happy. We need you to do what you do the best you can.” Then he added, “but Jan is an excellent teacher. I need to support her too. Let me think this over, and I’ll get back to you.”

Three weeks later, the reading committee was planning to meet after school, and David still hadn’t heard back from his principal.

COACHING COACHES TOOLS

Tool 13: Case–The Reluctant Instructional Leader



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Is there anything David should have done differently in the past?

*The school improvement planning process is just in the first stages.
What should David do now?*

*Should David be on the School Improvement Team? Which committees
and teams should David be on at Terra Nova High School?*

*What should David do about his principal's lack of knowledge about
interventions? How far should David go in directing his principal?*

How should the Partnership Principles shape David's actions at this point?

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Tool 14: Case—A Broken Trust



Cathy Winslow sat in her car, staring out the through the windshield lost in thought. A coach for only a few months, Cathy was deeply concerned that she had made the wrong career choice. “I think that everyone is against me, she thought to herself.” The sad truth was that Cathy was close to being right.

Cathy had the best reasons for becoming a coach. By helping teachers improve the way they taught, Cathy felt she could have a lasting impact on the lives of all the students those teachers taught. And Cathy was successful at first. She found teachers to work with; she modeled in the classrooms, and she observed teachers and gave them feedback. Things started out quite well.

Those days seemed a long time ago, unfortunately. In October, Cathy had a casual conversation with her principal Dr. Carolyn Austin. During the chat, Carolyn asked Cathy how she thought a few teachers were doing, and Cathy was quick to say how impressed she was. Then Dr. Austin asked about Tom Drekker. Cathy was a bit taken a back, but she couldn’t hide her true feelings. Cathy knew Tom quite well. He was a real leader in the school, and Cathy didn’t think he was leading the school in the right direction. “Well the truth is,” Cathy says, “I don’t think he belongs in our school. He refuses to do anything I suggest, and I just don’t think he cares about kids.” Cathy and Carolyn talked for a few minutes about the situation, and then moved on to other topics.

A few days after their meeting, Tom Drekker sought out Cathy in the staff lounge and confronted her in the hall. In front of several staff, Tom turned on the coach, saying, “If I had know you were a spy for the principal, I never would have let you in my classroom. Thanks for screwing up my relationship with Austin.” After his outburst, Tom stormed past Cathy and headed back to his classroom. Apparently, Dr. Austin had followed up on her conversation with Cathy and confronted Tom. When Tom quickly realized the Dr. Austin had been talking Cathy, he was furious, and told his colleagues about the breach of trust. From that day on, teachers were much less interested in working with their Cathy. Most staff, whether they liked Tom or not, felt that he had been treated poorly, and they didn’t feel comfortable working with their coach. Cathy knew she should have done things differently, but she wasn’t sure what.

COACHING COACHES TOOLS

Tool 14: Case—A Broken Trust



YOUR QUESTIONS:

What did Cathy do, if anything, that she shouldn't have done?

What did Principal Austin do, if anything, that was wrong?

What do you think should or should not be confidential in the conversations between a coach and principal?

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Tool 15: Case–Respect



Two weeks after starting as an Instructional Coach at Holy Smokes High School, Michael Jurado ran into Kristin Wilson, a new teacher in the school. Somewhat exasperated, Kristin, said to Tom, “I’ve been looking for you. You’ve got to help me reach my students.” Tom offered to come by and observe Kristin’s class, and the next week he dropped by to see what was happening. Tom was unprepared, however, for what he saw in the classroom.

To say that Kristin’s class was out of control would be a real understatement. It appeared to Michael that every student was off-task at some point during the class. Kristin was respectful and kind towards students, but they simply ignored her requests. Students arrived late, engaged in loud side conversations, shouted to students in the hall. Two girls had turned their back to their teacher, with one braiding the other girl’s hair. Two students were playing cards. Three students were text messaging friends. “Wow,” thought Michael, “this looks like a class where I can make a difference.”

When Michael sat down to talk with Kristin, however, he had a hard time getting words into the conversation. Kristin told him about the students’ lives, the challenges they faced, the abuses they had experienced. “I don’t know if any one has ever been kind to these students,” she said. “If nothing else, I’m going to treat them with respect.” Kim then talked about giving the kids a safe space to be themselves. It seemed like Kim really didn’t see any problems with her class. However, when Michael asked her if she was happy with the lesson, Kristin was overcome with emotion and just shook her head no. At that point, the bell rang, and Kristin had to go back to her class, leaving Michael to wonder what he should do next.

What should Michael do next?
